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In the Claims:

1-15 (Cancelled)

16. (New) A contact center comprising;

16 a local area network; and  
b a first and at least a second switching apparatus for  
connecting to at least one public network, said first and at  
least said second switching apparatus being configured to  
communicate over said local area network and arranged to  
communicate with each other over said local area network, wherein each  
switching apparatus includes:

1 a first point of interface T designating a number  
of incoming trunks; ]

1 [ a second point of interface S designating a number  
of agent stations; ] *Interface = # of Stations*

1 a third point of interface R designating a number  
of call processing resources; and

1 B a fourth point of interface B designating only a  
number of broadband connections reserved for connecting one  
switching apparatus to another, wherein B is greater than or equal

*why in case  
of failure*

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to T+S.

17. (New) The contact center as claimed in claim 16 wherein T includes PSTN.

18. (New) The contact center as claimed in claim 16 wherein T includes internet telephony.

19. (New) The contact center as claimed in claim 16 wherein R includes conference, recording, and playback resources. *R*

*Q* / 20. (New) The contact center as claimed in claim 16 wherein *TM* said switching apparatus includes time division multiplexing.

21. (New) The contact center as claimed in claim 20 wherein a number of time *lots* is set such that said contact center is linearly expandable and the switching channels in an additional, newly added switching apparatus are all utilized for call switching rather than interfacing with other switching apparatus. *see plot like ST*

22. (New) The contact center as claimed in claim 21 wherein a

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number of time lots includes T+S+R+B.

see p. 1 over ex

23. (New) The contact center as claimed in claim 20 wherein T, S, R, and B are set for a given number of timeslots such that said contact center is linearly expandable and the switching channels in an additional, newly added switching apparatus are all utilized for call switching rather than interfacing with other switching apparatus.

24. (New) The contact center as claimed in claim 16 wherein a plurality of connections to agent stations are connected to said switching apparatuses through a legacy PBX. Cpl, l 50

25. (New) The contact center as claimed in claim 16 wherein contact center includes N switching apparatus, M backup switching apparatus, and means for detecting when one of said N switching apparatus is faulty and for rerouting channels normally serviced by said faulty N switching apparatus to said backup M switching apparatus for service, said backup M apparatus being configured to service any of said faulty N switching apparatus which is detected as failing.

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26. (New) The contact center as claimed in claim 25 wherein M  
equals one.

27. (New) The contact center as claimed in claim 25 wherein M  
is less than N.